

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION V**



DATE: September 5, 2002

SUBJECT: Acme Solvent Site Visit--Pipe(s) Near South Boundary

FROM: Bernard J. Schorle, Superfund Div., RPM for Pagel's Pit Site (SR-6J)

TO: David Linnear, Superfund Div., RPM (SR-6J)

On Friday, July 12, 2002, I received a call around 4:00 pm through the Community Involvement section from Glen Ekberg, a businessman in the Rockford, Illinois, area and a property owner (residence, I believe, and farm land) in the neighborhood of the Acme Solvent Reclaiming, Inc. site, and Bryan Davis, who works for Congressman Donald Manzullo. They had called after having received a notice that there was going to be a five-year review done for the Pagel's Pit Superfund site. However, the subject of their call was the pipe(s) (he said two) that Glen Ekberg reported were on his property and on the Acme Solvent Reclaiming, Inc. property, near the boundary between the two properties. Acme Solvent is a Superfund site that is east of Pagel's Pit and east of Lindenwood Rd. Glen Ekberg said that these two pipes had been discharging liquid for some time and at least some of liquid flows onto his property. It was unclear how long he believes these pipes have been there. Glen Ekberg said that he did not know where the liquid was coming from. He said something about an "artificial spring", but when I said that the only way water under the Acme Solvent property could normally be discharged to the surface was by pumping he said that the water could flow out by itself. He said that these were about 12 in pipe and were stainless steel. He wanted something resolved with regard to this before the five-year review report that I am doing was signed; he did not want to get accused of discharging from the pipe. I told him that the pipe here had nothing to do with Pagel's Pit. Since I could not convince him that there was no connection with Pagel's Pit and since I was planning on making a trip to the area the following week anyway, I said that I would take a look at the pipe. He said that he would not be available the following week and that I should contact Dean Ekberg, but he gave me a phone number for John Ekberg.

After leaving a message for John Ekberg and being told that I should call Dean Ekberg, I made arrangements to meet Dean Ekberg at his quarry, Ekberg Material, which is just north of the Acme Solvent site, on Thursday, July 18, about 1:30 pm. During my talk with Dean Ekberg on July 17, 2002, he said that these two pipes had been discharging at about 200 gpm for about 2 1/2 years. However, about the previous Saturday evening he was at the site of the pipes and there was no liquid discharging from them. He said that he believes the last time he was out there was about 1 1/2 months previously and there was liquid flowing from the pipes. He said that the pipes were there at least in the mid 1990s. Their farm property where the one pipe is was bought by them in about 1989.

Before contacting Dean Ekberg I had already been in contact with Megan Brynhildsen of Nationwide Environmental Services, Inc., a contractor for the Acme Solvent PRP Group so that we

would be able to go on the Acme Solvent property; she said that she would be at the site in order to accompany us.

I met Dean Ekberg about 1:30 pm on July 18 at the quarry. After he, Mark Hollis, an acquaintance of his, and I discussed some of their concerns about Pagel's Pit and some other environmental concerns for about 50 min in his trailer at the quarry, we went to the treatment plant at Acme Solvent. Also accompanying us was Holly McQueen, a photographer with the *Rockford Register Star*. While I was talking with Dean Ekberg and Mark Hollis she had been taking pictures of us. She was not introduced to me at the time, but I had met her that morning when she came to the landfill to take some pictures following a meeting with a reporter from the *Register Star*. I had not told her or the reporter about my meeting with Dean Ekberg or my planned trip to Acme Solvent. Mark Hollis did not go with us to Acme Solvent.



At Acme Solvent we met Megan Brynhildsen, K. C. Wulf, who is with Environmental Contractors of Illinois, Inc., a contractor at the Acme Solvent site, and Tom Hilbert, who is with Winnebago Reclamation, Inc., the operator of the Pagel landfill. We drove out onto the site and parked our vehicles near the south border where the road turns north and then swings back toward the entrance; the road does continue toward the east near the south boundary, but it becomes much more primitive. We walked further east, eventually going into the brush along the south boundary. Dean Ekberg eventually found the pipe end on the Acme Solvent property. I did not attempt to precisely mark where the pipe is. However, it is located opposite a portion of the fence where fence fabric was not installed; on either side of the opening, the fence posts are bigger in diameter than the normal ones that have been used at the fabric, and barbed wire extends across the opening above where the fabric would be if it had been installed. It appears that the opening in the fence was left there intentionally when the fence was constructed.

The picture above shows the end of the pipe on the Acme Solvent property; this is part of one of several pictures that I took. I did not look closely at the corrugated pipe to see what material it might be; it has been described as stainless steel, but it may not be. Note that the end of the pipe has been slightly damaged, but there is still a wide opening. Note that the pipe is angled upward

from the ground; it is pointing approximately toward the northwest so that at this point it appears to be coming from the field south of Acme Solvent. No liquid was coming from the pipe and there were no signs of liquid present.

The pipe that is located in the Ekberg corn field to the south was also found. This pipe looks much like the other, and possibly is part of the other. The pipe had been buried a few inches deep but in this spot it is exposed and appears to be approximately horizontal. There is a tear in its side, but no liquid was coming out.

No explanation for the existence of the pipe(s) is readily available. As far as I know, the pipe or pipes are not connected with any of the remediation work that has been done at Acme Solvent. In fact most, if not all, of the contamination at the Acme Solvent site was found to the west of this area.

I suggest that, at least for a few months, someone periodically (every one to two weeks) check the pipe(s) to see if any discharge of liquid is occurring. If a discharge is seen at one opening and not the other, this needs to be noted. It would be especially useful to check the pipe(s) after any fairly heavy rainstorms. If a regular discharge is observed, I suggest that the discharge be sampled and analyzed for appropriate parameters to determine if the liquid is unacceptably contaminated. One thing that should be checked with any sampling is whether it appears that the liquids at both pipe openings are the same or different. I also suggest that the existence of the pipe(s) be noted in the next five-year review for the Acme Solvent site and that any changes from the observations reported here be noted there.

cc: Bryan Davis, Congressman Donald Manzullo's Office
Glen Ekberg
Dean Ekberg, Ekberg Material, Inc.
Megan Brynhildsen, Nationwide Environmental Services, Inc.
Tom Hilbert, Winnebago Reclamation, Inc.